

Strategy 1. Use online and digital technologies

The range of uses of the Internet and digital devices has increased significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic and it is clear that they can contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. For example, during the pandemic, the use of online and digital technologies by restaurants and other businesses has risen dramatically for delivery services and e-commerce.¹ To achieve the SDGs after the pandemic, it will be crucial to further establish and advance these technologies while also addressing any associated trade-offs.²

Key points for achieving the SDGs

1. Bridge the digital divide: The introduction of new technologies could lead to new disparities.³ Strategies are needed to avoid creating a digital divide.⁴ At the policy level, it is essential to implement at least the minimum guarantees to avoid creating a digital divide, such as by lending tablet computers or devices to households. For companies, public and private sector partnerships could create new opportunities to mitigate educational disparities that might arise due to a digital divide.
2. Develop sustainable business models: Business models need to be developed that use the Internet and do not rely on face-to-face interactions, in order to normalize the use of these technologies.⁵ New approaches to operations and business activities will be needed to ensure the growth of companies that adopt new work styles. To do so, such approaches should be viewed from the perspective of the SDGs' 17 goals and 169 targets. For example, the required energy should be procured from renewable energy.

¹ ILO (2020): World Employment and Social Outlook 2021: The role of digital labour platforms in transforming the world of work.

² Bertelsmann Stiftung and Sustainable Development Solutions Network (2020): Sustainable Development Report 2020, 12-13pp.

³ World Economic Forum (2021): The Global Risks Report 2021, 7-8pp.

⁴ WTO (2020): E-Commerce, Trade and the COVID-19 Pandemic,

⁵ Deloitte Tohmatsu Consulting LLC (2020): "Price be nimble, price be quick: Revenue management in the COVID-19 era"

<https://www.deloittedigital.com/content/dam/deloittedigital/us/documents/offerings/offering-20200519-customer-covid-nimble-pricing.pdf>

In addition, it will be necessary to address poverty issues that may arise due to employment mismatches. For example, such measures should be considered in employment strategies in new business models. Policies will need to integrate a “digital transformation” (DX) and a “sustainability transformation” (SX).

3. Include digital technologies in international cooperation: Expand the possibilities for utilizing digital technologies in international and multilateral cooperation. Technical assistance, interactions and networking can also be done remotely.

Key targets to help achieve the SDGs

- 4.1 (Access to free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education)
- 6.a (Support developing countries in water- and sanitation-related activities and programmes)
- 8.1 (Sustain per capita economic growth)
- 11.c (Support least developed countries in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials)
- 12.a (Support developing countries to strengthen their scientific and technological capacity to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production)
- 14.7 (Increase economic benefits to developing countries from sustainable use of marine resources)
- 14.a (Transfer marine technology to developing countries)
- 17.16 (Enhance global partnership)
- 17.17 (Encourage public, public-private and civil society partnerships)
- 17.18 (Enhance capacity-building support to developing countries to increase data availability)